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—The Naturalist has again changed publishers, and we hope that we will not again have to undergo the ordeal. The numbers can now be issued at the proper time if subscribers will be equally prompt in making payments. The number for December, 1891, was issued Feb. 1st, 1892. The late publishers failed to state this on the last page of that issue as requested by the senior editor.

General Notes.

GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVEL.

Recent Australian Exploration.—It was believed early in this century that the wholly unknown interior of Australia was watered by a great river system reaching the sea in the deep bays of the northwest part of the continent. It was to establish this supposed fact that Capt. Sir Philip King sailed along this coast in 1820, entering all the deep inlets to find some great river mouth. One day he sailed twenty-five miles up Hanover Bay, discovering a large river which he named the Prince Regent. The next year he ascended the river for fifty miles. Nearly seventeen years elapsed before another expedition under the command of Sir George Gray, was sent to Hanover Bay to complete the exploration of the river. The natives fell upon the party and wounded its leader so badly that he hastened back to civilization. From that day until last year no further effort was made to solve the problem of the Prince Regent River.

The latest *Petermann's Mitteilungen* contains a report of the expedition led a year ago by Mr. Joseph Bradshaw, of Melbourne, through this wholly unknown part of Australia. Landing at Wyndham, on Cambridge Gulf, with four white companions and two natives and a supply of provisions carried on pack horses, the little party plunged southwest into the unknown wilderness towards Prince Regent River. They had not gone far before they met natives as wild as any that were ever dismayed by the apparition of white men. The savages living along one river plunged into the water and swam across the stream upon the approach of the expedition.

Nearly all the way to the Prince Regent River the party traveled through tall grass. One species known as the black oat grass was from nine to twelve feet high, and it was difficult for the little caravan to force their way through it. At one place, where many enormous sandstone blocks were scattered over the plain, they found numerous large holes excavated in the boulders in which the natives had stored the bones of their dead. The skeletons were not preserved intact, but the bones were packed closely together, and large stones covered them, apparently to prevent wild dingoes from scattering them. These curious mausoleums were found along a creek which Mr. Bradshaw named Sepulchre Creek. Here also he found a hitherto unknown fish of fine flavor which he was not able to find in any of the other rivers. He proved that the great desert of inner Australia does not extend thus far to the northwest, for the region through which he passed was watered by scores of creeks and rivers, while tropical vegetation luxuriantly flourished.

One day the party came to an unexpected impediment. A wall of high hills rose so precipitously that it was impossible to lead the horses up the slope. After hours of search a narrow valley was discovered between whose steep, high sides they traveled for about a mile until they reached the summit of a comparatively level, well-grassed plain. On this plateau they traveled for several days before they descended on the other edge. They found it very difficult to get through the tangle of hills bordering this little plateau on the western side, and for four days they were busy with axes under the glowing heat of the tropical sun cutting a road for the horses. A little beyond they ascended a mountain about 1,500 feet high, from which a very fine prospect extended from all directions.

On all sides stretched away the hills of lesser elevation, covered to their tops with thick growing grass, while as far as the eye could reach could be seen a great abundance of lagoons and watercourses fringed with papyrus and palms. It was a fine tropical prospect and very different from the semi-arid region which must begin not a great distance to the southeast.

Mr. Bradshaw was particularly struck with the work of white ants in the western part of the region he traversed. In one place, for instance, he discovered a perpendicular pillar with a diameter of about three feet and nearly ten feet in height. It stood in the middle of an enormous rock, at least forty feet from the nearest bit of soil. All the material for this structure must have been carried by these little insects forty to fifty feet, involving enormous labor.

As the party neared the Prince Regent River the country became more difficult to traverse on account of the steep hills, the great blocks of porphyry and sandstone in their way, and the tall grass.

Sometimes they traveled for hours up a valley to find that it was cul de sac, and all their labor was lost. At last they struck the Prince Regent River, and here they found many natives, doubtless the children of those that had attacted Sir George Gray. They were very shy, and were painted with red and white stripes in a wonderful manner. Many of them wore a curious headdress made of papyrus. As weapons they carried spears and nullis, as well as bows and arrows, but no boomerangs were seen.

The Prince Regent River was reached just a little above the point attained by Sir Phillip King. In a straight line they were about 150 miles from their starting point, but they had traveled nearly double that distance. It is a beautiful river, about 200 feet wide at the place where Bradshaw struck it, and its waters coming from the Leopold Mountain chain, which is marked on the maps, are cold and refreshing. The party ascended the river, only to find that about a day's journey above the place attained by Sir Philip King a splendid waterfall puts an end to navigation. This waterfall extends from bank to bank and the entire volume of water has a perpendicular fall of thirty feet. They traveled for five days along the river bank above the waterfall to mountains through which the river flows, and along the rocky walls that hem in the narrow river they found many caverns on whose walls the natives had made paintings in red, black, white, brown, yellow, and light blue. There were figures of men with profiles well drawn, and kangaroos, wallabies, crocodiles and other animals were graphically portrayed.

The noteworthy discovery was made that for a distance of fifty miles the Prince Regent River flows between two entirely different rock formations. The right shore is composed of basaltic rocks and the left is sandstone. The territory on the right bank is well wooded and grassed, while on the west there is found mostly only prickly spinifex and black oat grass with boulders strewn over the country.

Mr. Bradshaw was well satisfied with the result of his journey. His purpose was to ascertain if this region was adapted for cattle raising. He has satisfied himself fully that ranches can be established to good advantage at many places between the northern coast and Prince Regent River. South of the river vegetation changes its character and doubtless merges at no great distance into the almost verdureless expanses of the great thirst region of inner Australia. His party was very short of provisions before they got back to Cambridge Gulf, where they arrived on May 14. They, however, eked out their rations with wild turkeys, kangaroos, iguanas and fish, and at Cambridge Gulf they were glad to find again some of the comforts of civilization in the huts of the hospitable Chinese who occupy the most advanced post of civilization in that region.

Bradshaw's journey has revealed the character of one of the large unexplored regions of Australia. About the same time David Lindsay was crossing the greatest unknown expanse in southwest Australia. He has now gone north to traverse an unexplored district in the west central part of the continent, and when he completes this journey there will be no large region in Australia that is not fairly well known in its general aspects.—*N. Y. Sun.*

GEOLOGY AND PALEONTOLOGY.

The Genus Scolithus.—Mr. Joseph F. James read a paper before the meeting of the Geological Society at Washington entitled "Studies in Problematic Organisms—The Genus Scolithus." After a lengthy review of the literature concerning this subject, the author discusses the fossils as follows:

"There have been described of the genus from North America the following species:

Scolithus (*Fucoides*) *shepardii* Hitchcock, 1833 (Triassic).

S. linearis Haldemann, 1840 (Lower Cambrian).

S. (*Fucoides*) *verticalis* Hall, 1843 (Portage).

S. clintonensis (n. sp.), proposed for *S. verticalis* Hall, 1852, preoccupied (Clinton and Medina).

S. canadensis Billings, 1862 (Potsdam).

S. minutus Wing, 1877 (Calciferous).

S. tuberosus Miller and Dyer, 1878 (Cincinnati).

S. (*Arenicolites*) *woodii* Whitfield, 1880 (Potsdam or St. Croix).

S. delicatulus U. P. James, 1881 (Cincinnati).

S. dispar U. P. James, (*Eophyton dispar*), 1881 (Cincinnati).

S. minnesotensis (n. sp.), Winchell, 1884, described but not named (St. Peters).

The geological range of the genus appears from this list to be from the Lower Cambrian to the Triassic. *S. shepardii* from the Triassic does not differ in any essential respect from *S. linearis* from the Cambrian. It is impossible to separate *S. verticalis* of the Portage from *S. clintonensis* of the Clinton and Medina, or either of these from *S. linearis.* As we have already shown, *S. canadensis* and *S. linearis*